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Hybrid Activism: Paths of Globalisation in the Brazilian Environmental Movement

Angela Alonso
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Hybrid Activism: Paths of Globalisation in the Brazilian Environmental Movement

Angela Alonso

Summary

Focusing on two case studies of environmental activism in Brazil, this paper argues against theories that consider local and global activism as two separate realms. Instead, it is argued here that transnational activists circulate across the two spaces. In the global spaces, they build alliances with foreign groups, and in the local ones, they deal with the national state, other organised groups and ordinary communities living inside environmental areas they aim to protect. Activists live in both spheres and as they move, they carry with them local and global meanings, knowledge and forms of action and organising, mixing them through the continuous action of two mechanisms: adaptation and emulation. In this way, activists' biographies – their lived experience, their meanings and strategies – intermingle with both spaces in one single trajectory of activism. Discussing the existing literature on transnational social movements, I will argue that they forge hybrid identities in the sense of being at the same time local *and* global.

Keywords: hybrid activism; transnational social movements; emulation; adaptation; trajectories of activism.

Angela Alonso is a professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of São Paulo, Brazil. She is also the coordinator of the Environmental Conflicts Area at CEBRAP (Brazilian Centre for Analysis and Planning). She has researched and produced a range of publications on social movements in Brazil.

Local Global Working Group preface

Working paper series on Citizen Engagements in a Globalising World

Around the world, globalisation, changes in governance and emerging transnational social movements are creating new spaces and opportunities for citizen engagement. Indeed, some would argue that citizenship itself is being de-linked from territorial boundaries, as power is becoming more multi-layered and multi-scaled, and governance increasingly involves both state and non-state actors, which often are transnational.

One of the research programmes of the Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability, the Working Group on Citizen Engagements in a Globalising World explores the significance of these changes to poor and disenfranchised citizens. In particular, the group's work explores how the diffusion of power and governance resulting from globalisation gives rise to new meanings and identities of citizenship and new forms and formations of citizen action. The research programme is asking questions across local-national-regional scales related to

- The dynamics of mobilisation, paying particular attention to new forms and tensions of alliance-building and claim-making;
- The politics of intermediation around representation, legitimacy, accountability;
- The politics of knowledge around framing issues, the power to frame, dynamics of contestation across forms of expertise and ways of knowing; and
- The dynamics and processes of inclusion and exclusion to examine who gains and who loses.

The group's work is a unique contribution to a vast literature on transnational citizen action in the way in which each project examines the vertical links from the local to the global from a citizen's perspective, looking up and out from the site of everyday struggles. And while much normative and conceptual literature examines the concept of global citizenship, few studies of the theme are actually grounded in empirical study of concrete cases that illustrate how global reconfigurations of power affect citizens' own perceptions of their rights and how to claim them.

The group is made up of 15 researchers carrying out field projects in India, South Africa, Nigeria, Philippines, Kenya, The Gambia, Brazil and South Africa, as well as other cross-national projects in Latin America and Africa. The projects examine new forms of citizen engagement across a number of sectors, including the environment, trade, eduation, livelihoods, health and HIV/AIDS work and occupational disease, agriculture and land – and across different types of engagement, ranging from transnational campaigns and social movements, to participation of citizens in new institutionally designed fora.

The working papers in this series on Citizen Engagements in a Globalising World will be available on the Citizenship DRC website www.drc-citizenship.org, as they are completed. The Citizenship DRC is funded by the UK's Department for International Development.

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Acknowledgements

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Acronyms

ARPA	Amazon Programme of Protected Areas
CAFOD RFUS	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development Rainforest Foundation USA
CEBRAP	Brazilian Center of Analysis and Planning
CEDI	Ecumenical Centre of Documentation and Information
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
CI	Conservation International
CNPq	National Council for Research
FASE	Federation of Organisations for Social and Educational Assistance
FBCN	Brazilian Foundation for Nature Conservation
FUNAI	Ministry of Environment and Indigenous National Foundation
GEF	Global Environmental Fund
GTA	Amazon Working Group
ICCO	Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation
IIZ	Institute for International Cooperation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPAM	Amazon Institute of Environmental Studies
ISA	Socio-environmental Institute
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
MaB	Man and the Biosphere
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NDI	Centre of Native Rights
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NSM	New Social Movement
OAS	Organization of American States
PD/A	Demonstrative Projects / Amazon
PP	Political Process
RFI	Forest Research Institute

RFN	Rainforest Foundation Norway
RM	Resource Mobilisation
RPPN	Programme for Private Natural Reserves
SAVE	Brazil, Sociedade para a Conservação das Aves do Brasil
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UFRJ	Federal University of Rio de Janeiro
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USP	University of São Paulo
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

Introduction

Suppose a middle-aged man at Kennedy Airport realises he has left a paper at home about sustainable development in the Brazilian countryside. He was keen to read it during his trip to Johannesburg, where he is expected to discuss global warming and de-forestation with other activists from across the world. The problem is easily solved. He opens his laptop to download the paper, which had been sent to him as an email attachment. In doing so, he opens an overflowing inbox, full of press releases on demonstrations against World Bank policies in the third world and proposals to collaborate with the Brazilian government on environmental management in the Amazon. As he proceeds to his terminal, he recognises someone (a Briton or Nigerian, he cannot recall) on the other side of the dividing glass whom he met at one of the United Nations summits. Before catching his flight, he considers once more whether a true environmentalist should globetrot from conference to conference, considering the significant contribution to global pollution this entails.

This story is not real, but it could be. Activists like this one continuously travel the world, carrying meanings, experiences and resources with them. You cannot tell where this man was born or where he lives from the vignette; these details are irrelevant because he is a man of the world, a citizen without roots or frontiers.

As I will argue, the fiction lies in this last statement – rather than in my imagined scene. Is it possible to be a global activist without local roots or local constraints? My research on Brazilian environmental activists indicates that it is not. Brazilian activists do not just 'globalise;' they also 'localise,' in the sense of preserving deep local roots. In fact, they operate connecting two spaces. Within global space, they build alliances with foreign groups, and in local space, they deal with the nation-state, other organised groups and communities inhabiting the natural environments they aim to protect. This, however, is just an analytical distinction. In real life, activists' own experiences make these spaces virtually indistinguishable. As a result, the identities of these activists are a hybrid, being at the same time local *and* global.

In the following pages, I will make the case for hybrid activism, first discussing the ways that the literature on social movements has dealt with the debates around local-global activism[1] and then demonstrating how hybrid activism works in a concrete case, relying on my in-depth research into two major Brazilian environmentalist organisations: the SOS Rainforest and the Socienvironmentalist Institute (ISA).[2]

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1 Here a distinction has to be made. Although the idea of hybridism may be applied to citizenship in general, this article aims to work with a narrower circumscription: the activists. Activism can be seen as the pro-active part of citizenship. Most of the time, citizens live their daily life and only episodically engage in mobilisation. However, some citizens engage in mobilisation as part of their quotidian routine, taking up a cause as a passion and a profession. This article is about them.

2 This argument is supported by qualitative evidence obtained through two kinds of fieldwork: (a) an investigation on *biographical trajectories* of prominent local-global activists, and (b) an investigation on the main *national-transnational environmental organisations* those activists created in Brazil through out the 1990s. From among the most important Brazilian environmental activists, all of whom had

1 The changing patterns of mobilisation according to the social movements literature

The array of processes commonly known as 'globalisation' are generally associated with new social spaces – bestowing economic, political and cultural interdependence and creating new forms of exchange – that supersede national territory and supplant national governments. A basic definition of globalisation, as proposed by Tarrow (2005: 5), emphasises the increasing velocity and volume in the flow of capital, goods, information, ideas, people and the forces connecting actors in different countries. He argues that economic globalisation is a historical fact that has recently intensified and, for the first time, spilled into the political and cultural spheres.

Globalisation generates new sets of collaborative and conflictive relations, new inequalities and new actors. The globalisation of politics, with the formation of multilateral and transnational agencies with control over political and economic processes such as The World Bank and The International Monetary Fund, offers new quarry for social movements. Their existence makes it possible for activists to raise grievances beyond the national sphere. The globalisation of knowledge, with the spread of new technologies, especially internet, and the rise of English as an international language, brings new possibilities for the diffusion of information and for interaction between citizens living far away from each other. New spaces and opportunities are opened for engagement; citizenship itself is de-linked from territory; power becomes multi-layered and multi-scaled, engaging actors from within and without the state; actors become transnational (Gaventa and Tandon 2007) and the act of protest rises above the state to the international sphere.

Despite their differences, all the main theories emerging from research on social movements in the 1970s and 1980s – Resource Mobilisation (RM), Political Process (PP) and New Social Movement (NSM) – were not primarily concerned with global processes. They defined social movements by virtue of their relationships to national political authorities and institutions (Zald and McCarthy

been surveyed in a questionnaire three years ago, the team selected local-global activists for more in-depth interviews. When after several attempts an interview was still not obtained, information about the individual was taken from autobiographical accounts, interviews from newspapers, commemorative books and websites. The list of interviewees can be found at the end of this paper. Organisations were then selected using as a criteria the number of activists they assemble, the resources they control, and the geographical area they cover. These criteria pointed to six organisations as the most important in the field: Funatura (For Nature Foundation), SOS Rainforest, ISA (Socio-environmental Institute), FASE (Federation of Organs for Social and Educational Assistance), WWF-Brazil, Greenpeace-Brazil. After a literature review on these organisations that included Websites, journals and bulletins, SOS and ISA were selected for in-depth fieldwork. Participative observation was made at both organisations; routines were followed, informal and exploratory interviews with activists were carried out and primary sources – such as activities reports, financial reports, acts of reunions, bulletins, and pamphlets about campaigns and projects – were gathered for the period 1992–2006. The list of the reports used is also available at the end of this paper.

1977; Habermas 1977; Tilly 1978; Touraine 1978). In the 1990s, social movement theories were quickly at a loss to explain the evolving patterns of activism recorded by a wave of empirical studies on transnational activism.

To begin with, contemporary forms of protest now link activists, associations and themes that cross national boundaries. Many protests are directed at multilateral institutions, international public opinion or global civil society, often ignoring the state as a relevant interlocutor. Citizen engagement occurs within these new spaces, and as a result local and international spheres seem to have replaced national states as the main forums for voicing grievances.

Second, social movements began to rely on new forms of organisation. Instead of forming small and cohesive groups or associations, such as NGOs, activists now continuously negotiate their connections, episodically aggregating into polycentric and fluid networks (Diani 1995). These networks are 'virtual' in the sense that the internet is the primary vehicle for connection, and solidarity among members is transitory, seldom consolidating in durable groups and identities. Activists shift continually from one cause to another and from one network to another, alternating strategies and highlighting different perspectives in each setting. As a result, many focal identities arise, but do not necessarily last.

Furthermore, networks are now formed around themes and no longer limited by borders. This leads to new ways of exercising citizenship, de-linked from a territory and, ultimately, from the nation-state. In this way, networks of activists not only challenge state authority but also sometimes supplant it by linking local and national civil society groups directly to international movements and arenas (Keck and Sikkink 1998).

Third, the issues at stake are no longer concerned with just one specific group or social setting. Movements become 'multi-issue' (Tarrow 2005) and build what may be termed (alluding to Gamsons' interpretative package (1992)) 'meaning packages'; sets of specific demands that overlap and come to be concentrated, appearing in public space as a powerful combination of ideas that facilitates alliances among previously isolated activists. These alliances lead to the emergence of previously unimagined actors such as black environmentalists and feminist land claimers. This makes it possible to reframe once local themes in a global light and to propel once parochial communities into the international sphere, for example by presenting small farmers in Brazil as the standard-bearer of the potential threat of genetically modified organisms to human health (Scoones 2006).

Fourth, activists have a new profile. Instead of shuttling between a local arena and the national political debate as they did in the 1980s (Sainteny 1999), social movement leaders now mingle in a global scene. Keck and Sikkink (1998) say they are 'activists without borders': a stratum of people internationally connected in the sense that they make global connections and use resources and opportunities originating outside their home country. Their 'boomerang hypothesis' states that activists access transnational networks as an alternative strategy for influencing national politics. Tarrow (2005), however, prefers to talk of 'rooted cosmopolitans,' emphasising that activists are never detached from local and national societies.[3] These definitions point to a new kind of activist who combines

new skills with local and global participation, giving him or her (and this is the point I will explore later) a hybrid character rather than merely a global one.

Fifth, there are new challenges to building a sense of collective identity. Identity is no longer a resource used during the mobilisation process; it is one of the issues at stake. It is forged amid an array of social differences, including language and culture, the characteristics of the issue at hand, and the form and scale of mobilisation. Political identities may be 'embedded', working as an orientation for the everyday life, or 'detached,' informing 'only a narrow, specialised range of intermittent social relations' (McAdam *et al.* 2001: 135) and activated during a specific conflict. Social movements usually take one aspect of an embedded identity and transform it into a detached one, thus converting common citizens into activists. New identities can emerge from mobilisation, and existing ones may be appropriated and redefined.

These transformations of activism with regard to scale, issues, organisation and identity-building presented conceptual challenges to social movement theories.

The New Social Movements (NSM) tradition responded in two ways. The insights of Melucci (1996) on a 'society of information' facilitated the re-tooling of a theory premised on the centrality of nation-states to one that fit a global network society. Mobilisation would no longer target the state, but the production and the circulation of knowledge. The main issue would be the democratisation of knowledge. Castells (1996) goes further in this direction. In a 'network society', Castells argues, citizens face the problem of building a collective identity without having the state as a reference. Globalisation and identity have become the main subjects of mobilisation, forged by networks of communication based on new technologies and media. The theory following this line has centred on the process of identity formation and the cognitive dimensions associated with activism.

The second direction taken by the reformulation of NSM theory was derived from Habermas' theory of civil society, as developed by Arato and Cohen (1992). New theories in this tradition focus on networks among transnational non-governmental organisations, seeing them as the successors of 1970s 'new social movements'. They defined the even newer wave of movements as a 'globalising civil society'[4] which innovates by bringing transnational issues and supra-national forms of action to the political scene (Wapner 1996; Held 1998; Anheier *et al.* 2001; Clark 2003). These Global Civil Society theories have a bias toward those movements, particularly when referring to the South where forms of 'globalisation-from-below' – which is to say from common citizens – would challenge forms of 'globalisation-from-above,' carried out by northern firms, national states and traditional politics (for instance Falk 1999). From this perspective, globalisation becomes an 'empowering force' for groups from developing countries. The argument is similar

3 They are 'individuals and groups who mobilise domestic and international resources and opportunities to advance claims on behalf of external actors, against external opponents, or in favour of goals they hold in common with transnational allies.' (Tarrow 2005: 43).

4 'Cosmopolitan democracy', 'global governance' models, action of citizen groups within international institutions become the focus of new empirical studies.

to the boomerang thesis: cooperation with international NGOs increases the expertise of local groups, which improves their capacity to influence national politics (Lipschutz 1996; Archibugi, Held and Kolher 1998).

The Political Process Theory also went through two changes in response to the changing scenario. In one theoretical revision, it incorporated cultural and micro-sociological approaches, such as frame analysis (Snow and Benford 2000) and the cognitive approach, in order to examine agency. Additionally, it opened itself to a broader definition of its field of study – considering not just social movements, but all types of contention – renaming the theory as Contentious Politics Approach and presenting a new set of explanatory social mechanisms [5] that in different combinations would explain all kinds of contention (McAdam *et al.* 2001).

Tarrow (2005) used the new Contentious Politics approach to explain the trans-nationalisation of activism. He stresses that transnational collective action relies on the creation and dissemination of global framing; international symbols used to characterise a domestic issue or conflict to give it a global dimension. This global framing process opens a space for the building of local-global identities among grassroots movements and national and international groups. In this way, domestic claims are projected to international institutions and actors and return home with the boomerang effect (as described by Keck and Sikkink 1998). International coalitions can then be formed as horizontal networks of actors from different countries with similar grievances. The preference for 'transnational' instead of 'global' activism shows that Tarrow, in opposition to the Global Civil Society approach, still considers the rise of social movements inside the nation-state. From this departing point, he elaborates his concept of how collective mobilisation comes to be internationalised.

These trends in social movement literature have appeared in the most recent examinations of activism in Latin America.[6] The Contentious Politics approach has rarely been applied to Latin American cases and, when it has, it has often been combined with NSM theory (Davis 1999; Oxhorn 2001; Mattiace 2005). The Global Civil Society approach inherited the NSM theory's hegemony in Latin American studies (Haber 1996; Roberts 1997; Davis 1999; Shefner 2004), keeping its hallmarks, such as its focus on the 'innovative political culture' of social movements (Roberts 1997) and identities, on meanings and on discourses (Alvarez *et al.* 1998). Although it has also expanded the purview of social movement studies to include the participation of civil society organisations in decision-making arenas, governance experiences and participatory mechanisms, the focus still relies on the cultural dimensions of activism, rarely discussing concrete practices and neglecting its material and institutional basis. Therefore,

5 These mechanisms are the attribution of opportunity and threat, social appropriation, brokerage by activists, category and identity formation, object shift, certification, diffusion, scale shift, radicalisation, convergence.

6 Latin America has a strong tradition on social movements' studies inspired by Marxism. Most of the work was done in the 1970s and 1980s. After this peak, Davis (1999) shows, the literature remains restricted to case studies, empirically rich but under-theorised and politically engaged.

studies about collective mobilisation have declined significantly in Latin America as of late.[7]

Both the theoretical debates on transnational activism as well as studies on Latin American cases have reproduced conflicting interpretations of national social movements. The Global Civil Society approach stands on the shoulders of NSM theories and thus has inherited its advantages and disadvantages. The theory is very sensitive to transnational political identities, meanings and cognitive dimensions, though it is weak when discussing the interests and organisations that make activism work. The concept of Global Civil Society is vague and overestimates the stability of transnational articulations among activists (Tarrow 2005; Rootes 2003). It is also normative, only considering 'emancipating' aspects and groups, and ignoring, for instance, terrorism as a global form of activism. In addition, the theory stresses a single social force – citizens – and ignores most inequalities and hierarchies between Northern and Southern civil society groups (Keane 2001, 2003; Rohrschneider and Dalton 2002; Smith 2005). Few studies are actually grounded in empirical study of concrete cases of how global reconfigurations of power actually affect citizens' own perceptions of the forms and possibilities of engagement.

The Contentious Politics approach is strong when examining concrete features and material resources of an activism organisation, but it shares the limits of Political Process. It has been criticised for merely adapting categories to move from the national to the transnational scale, highlighting the trajectory of domestic groups without paying attention to changes that might be occurring in the nature of mobilisation. On the other hand, its list of explanatory mechanisms is so long and can appear in so many combinations that explanations are overly particular. The approach also lacks the conceptualisation of some cultural dimensions of globalisation, such as knowledge. Mobilisation includes contests over resources but also over interpretations. Constructivist studies (Epstein 1996) show how knowledge disputes play an increasingly important role in conflicts involving social movements, producing a 'scientisation of politics' and a 'politicisation of science.'

Both perspectives also share a common problem: the assumption that there are two autonomous levels to be connected, local and global, or three in the case of Contentious Politics, since the national level remains important in this theoretical perspective. In separating domestic and international levels, however, two theoretically constructed spheres are taken as actual empirical realms. In this way, the local-global issue reproduces the abstract dichotomy between society and the state found in the old literature on social movements.

McAdam *et al.* (2001) argued against this dichotomy, insisting that there are no physical boundaries separating state from civil society. Issues and people continuously circulate from one sphere to another. The same argument can be made at the local-global level. Individuals are embedded in local, national and global realms simultaneously.

7 This conclusion came from a survey the electronically available Latin-American academic journals from 2000 to 2006 (Alonso, Maciel and Salgado 2007).

This is a novelty of contemporary social movements. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, national and international realities may have been analytically separate, but globalisation of economics and information has since weakened this distinction. Any political action can have immediate repercussion and meaning at all scales. Activism, therefore, does not operate by 'shifting' from one sphere to another. It is local-global all the time. This is a new type of activism, which mixes local and global in its own fashion: a hybrid activism.

In order to understand hybrid activism, concepts from Contentious Politics and Global Civil Society can be used, but they need to be considered from a new perspective. In spite of their differences, these schools share a structuralist bias, focusing on changes in large social structures and on the evolution of long social processes, which cannot be attributed to specific people. Both traditions fail to see the symbolic micro-interactions that constitute social life. Recently, however, both schools of thought have given increased attention to identity-making and cognitive processes. Nevertheless, these additions were made to essentially structuralist theories and hence remain unable to describe the way transnational social movements emerge from meanings, experiences and the actions of tangible individual agents. Systematically speaking, the existing theories need to be turned upside-down. It is necessary to take agents, and not structures, as the primary point of departure.

Some recent social movement literature has moved in this direction by focusing on biographies of activists, their experiences, morals and emotions (for instance, Jasper 1997; Polletta 2006). This kind of work, however, has not been fully incorporated into the debate on the globalisation of activism. To connect them would require a focus on the individual's production of meanings, knowledge and strategies without losing sight of how micro-interactions are constrained by global structures and processes. Accordingly, a methodological approach to global activism needs to begin with citizens' lived experience in a 'seeing like a citizen' approach (Gaventa and Tandon 2007), paying close attention to the way individual biographies operate the exchange of meanings, knowledge and strategies that build the process and structures of globalisation. This process also involves the politics of intermediation (the standards of accountability between activists and local communities) and the politics of knowledge (forms of expertise used to frame contested issues).

To understand how local-global trajectories of mobilisation and hybrid identities and meanings are built requires an investigation into concrete local-global interactions in a particular case. The Brazilian case I present next illustrates these dynamics. It also provides an opportunity to advance Tilly's hypothesis (2005) that the two mechanisms of inequality-building can be found to structure the local-global relationship.

The first mechanism is *emulation*, when actors 'reproduce organisational modes already operating elsewhere, importing configurations' (Tilly 2005: 156). Local activists, still organised or in the process of organising, are attracted to North American and European civil society organisations, which historically have identified specific geographic areas as priorities for their work. These Northern organisations look for local allies to implement their agendas and strategies and disseminate their ideas. Some local activists respond to the foreign ones by

selecting, from the local context, the ideas, agendas and strategies amenable to the current foreign framing. This emulation mechanism makes it possible to build a global-local alliance in which the foreign activists gain access to local projects and arenas, while the local activists gain access to global ones.

The second mechanism is *adaptation*, which happens when actors use existing models, but also 'invent procedures' (Tilly 2005: 84). Local activists grasp the new opportunities brought by globalisation, reframing the local issues they already work with. They create new labels and boundaries that facilitate placing these themes within global debates, attracting foreign resources and gaining access to global forums. Alliances with foreign actors are strategic, looking to transnational institutions rather than to global activists in the same field. Although they also have to modulate ideas, agendas and strategies to get foreign collaboration, these activists do that by adapting their own meanings, agendas and strategies. The adaptation mechanism makes it possible to build a local-global alliance, in the sense that local activists use foreign channels to globalise and finance their own agendas.

By following individual environmental activists' trajectories and the groups they build, I will argue that the Brazilian case presents a good example of how both mechanisms structure hybrid activism.

2 Trajectories of mobilisation

2.1 The global-local path: the SOS Rainforest case

Russell A. Mittermeier is a 59-year-old New Yorker, a son of German immigrants. As a kid he dreamed of being a 'jungle explorer.' At Dartmouth College, he majored in biology and minored in anthropology, and then went on to study biological anthropology at Harvard where he graduated in 1971. While studying neo-tropical monkeys in the 1970s, he came to be interested in Brazil:

> *(...) I decided that Brazil is the most interesting country in the whole world for primates, because it has more or less between 20 per cent and 25 per cent of the Earth's primates.*
>
> (Russell Mittermeier, interview, 25 February 2005)

Mittermeier became acquainted with Brazilian environmental activists through the scientific road. He contacted Brazilian scientists, mainly zoologists, working on natural conservation and became close to Adelmar Coimbra Filho, one of the leaders of the biggest Brazilian conservationist organisations at that time, the FBCN (Brazilian Foundation for Nature Conservation). At that point, the global-local connection was made.

Since 1971, Mittermeier has visited the country annually. First, he came as an individual scientist, but since 1977 he has travelled as the representative of a new international organisation concerned with environmental protection. He was then the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature's) chairman for primates

and in 1978 he joined the World Wildlife Fund as the Primates Programme director.

Mittermeier joined the WWF as a result of his link to Brazil. In the 1970s, he and the organisation simultaneously grew concerned over the future of Amazon wildlife. The Amazon, however, was not a top priority for Brazilian environmental activists, who at the time were few, concentrated in the Southwest of the country and principally interested in urban problems (Alonso *et al.* 2005) and in a forest located nearby São Paulo, the Atlantic Rainforest. Coimbra and other conservationists, such as José Carlos de Melo Carvalho, all of them with a scientific background, persuaded Mittermeier to change his focus:

> *I was always interested in the Amazon, but Coimbra persuaded me that the Atlantic Rainforest really was a high priority (…).*
>
> (Russell Mittermeier, interview, 25 February 2005)

Despite the fact that the initial connection was global-local, given that Mittermeier initiated the relationship, local activists quickly understood the opportunities that this brought to them. Brazilian activists emulated the conservationism, but reframed it, giving a new meaning to the idea of tropical forest, summed up with the label 'rainforest', which referred first and foremost to the forest areas nearby São Paulo. In doing this, Coimbra and other FBCN activists were able to channel the WWF funds to their focus area. The first joint initiative between Brazilian activists and Mittermeier was a study of the rainforest, which lasted from 1979 to the late 1980s. During this research, they in fact constructed the term 'rainforest' itself as a political issue:

> *(...) this research also contributes to the propaganda about what rainforest is to the outside world, because (...) until the 1970s no one paid too much attention to Brazil.*
>
> (Russell Mittermeier, interview, 25 February 2005)

This Mittermeier-Coimbra connection shows how local activists reaped the benefits that an alliance with global actors brought to them. It also shows how the reframing of meanings, organisation-building and fund-raising came together.

Mittermeier worked as a broker. He obtained international resources from the United States and Switzerland as donations to the WWF, and then channelled these resources to projects carried out by Brazilian activists in the rainforest area. Resources were mainly allocated to projects of the FBCN, such as Aldemar Coimbra Filho´s expedition to locate the golden lion tamarin and to create a natural reserve to protect the species:

> *(...) given huge biodiversity, Brazil's importance, etc., the number of projects started to grow. One day it was the golden lion tamarin, the other day the turtle (…).*
>
> (Garo Batmanian interview, 31 August 2004)

By 1982, the global-local connection around the rainforest became part of the worldwide WWF campaign on tropical forests and primates:

> *And this campaign brought many resources to Brazil (…) this World Wildlife Fund programme started funding many projects in the region (...).*
>
> (Russell Mittermeier, interview, 25 February 2005)

Another FBCN activist, Paulo Nogueira Neto, benefited from this connection, coming to be one of two Latin American representatives in the Bruntdland Commission (1983–1986) and the president of Man and the Biosphere (MaB), a UNESCO programme, in 1983.

Despite his close connection to FBCN activists, Mittermeier paid attention to the emergence of many socio-environmentalist groups involved in the re-democratisation process in Brazil (Alonso *et al.* 2005). To join them, he eventually abandoned his original allies. As Aldemar Coimbra complains:

> *(...) the Brazilian Foundation for Nature Conservation was going down. (...) [while] he [Mittermeier] was in a very important, very strong position (…). He is the president of Conservation [International]. So, we lost [the contact].*
>
> (Aldemar Faria Coimbra Filho, interview, 20 January 2005)

At that time, Mittermeier encouraged young upper-class activists, such as Fábio Feldmann and João Paulo Capobianco, to organise a new conservationist organisation exclusively devoted to the rainforest. Fábio Feldmann is a lawyer and administrator who became involved with environmental activism from an urban perspective in the late 1970s (campaigning against the building of an airport in the city of São Paulo). He was linked to leftist parties in the early 1980s, and came to be the main environmentalist lawmaker during the Constituent Assembly in 1986. João Paulo Capobianco is a photographer and biologist, who specialised in Environmental Education at the University of Brasilia and studied Agriculture and Environment at the University of Campinas. His activism started with a campaign in defence of the environmental area of Juréia within the Atlantic Rainforest in the early 1980s.

These activists did not automatically connect to leftist parties, which allowed them to form two kinds of alliances. First, they joined pioneering environmentalists Coimbra and Paulo Nogueira Neto, a natural historian and lawyer from FBCN who had worked in the Brazilian environmental bureaucracy during the military regime and who had consolidated relationships with the international environmental community. They also brought the urbanist José Pedro de Oliveira Costa, a co-founder of the Pro Nature Foundation (Funatura), who had earned a PhD on the history of Brazilian forests and participated in building the environmental bureaucracy of the São Paulo government in the early 1980s. Second, they were able to attract environmental sympathisers who had no prior connection to activism, but who maintained close connections to the market. This is the case of Roberto Klabin and Rodrigo Lara Mesquita, both coming from families of entrepreneurs and businessmen themselves. These three activists, Feldmann, Mesquita and Kablin, would successively run the new organisation, the SOS Rainforest, from 1986 to the present.

The global and local environmentalist links Mittermeier had initiated in the 1970s brought the material resources that allowed those activists to join one another and

create the SOS Rainforest organisation in 1986. Naturally, Mittermeier immediately joined the SOS's advisory council, where he remains today.

The new group was motivated to explore global funding possibilities, and so the choice to build an organisation around the rainforest was primarily pragmatic:

> *The first resources for organising [SOS] were international. There was a project, assessment, a study, the rainforest's characterisation (...). There was a project coming from the United States that (...) had resources from the WWF and other organisations (...).*
>
> (Mário Mantovani interview, 26 July 2001)

Among the supporters these activists had in mind was Conservation International (CI). When Mittermeier shifted from one global organisation to another in 1989, a new link was added to the Brazilian activists' network. Mittermeier immediately became CI president, a position he still holds, which increased his capacity to raise financial support for environmental protection in Brazil. In 1989, Mittermeier was still the broker between SOS, FBCN and Pronatura (another Brazilian conservationist organisation), and the MacArthur Foundation:

> *(...) in 1989, one of the first things I did was take trip with the MacArthur Foundation (...). Then I arrived here [in Brazil] with the programme director at that time, Dan Martin, to show him what there was here in the rainforest, like organisations, like priority projects. (…) and based on our recommendations and meetings during these visits, the MacArthur Foundation decided to support our organisation to work in Brazil as well as three Brazilian organisations, which were Pronatura – which nowadays is not very active – the SOS and the FBCN.*
>
> (Russell Mittermeier, interview, 25 February 2005)

Mittermeier was driving a global-local connection, in the sense that he had all the contacts, influences and access to resources to make things happen. He carried out the politics of intermediation himself. In 1990, Conservation International released US$80,000 for activism related to the conservation of Brazilian forests. Part of this money was deliberately delivered to the local activism agenda:

> We will look for resources, will motivate individuals and institutions to support the project [the Lagamar, inside the Rainforest].
>
> (Peter Seligman, Conservation International Council Director, *Gazeta Mercantil,* 15 June 1990)

However, from another perspective, Brazilian activists, such as Roberto Klabin, Fabio Feldmann, then federal lawmaker, and Paulo Nogueira Neto, then Secretary of the Environment, collaborated in the administration of these resources. Brazilian activists were able to use the international funds and to shape the meaning of the actions the funds supported. In spite of his original fascination with the Amazon, Mittermeier did not urge the MacArthur Foundation to focus its support there, though CI did donate an amount of money to projects in this area (*Gazeta Mercantil*, 15 June 1990). Ultimately, Mittermeier accepted the local activists' opinion that the Atlantic Rainforest was the priority.

Brazilian activists quickly understood the importance of forging an independent global link. Rodrigo Lara Mesquita reports that he decided, as SOS president, to send one of the SOS activists, João Carlos Meirelles Filho, born to an important rural family, to the United States to learn how to raise funds from donor foundations:

> *(…) I got a scholarship in the United States, and he [Meirelles Filho] stayed there six months studying how [North-]American organisations related to the public to obtain recourses.*
>
> (Rodrigo de Lara Mesquita interview, 20 December 2004)

Nevertheless, this strategy simply reinforced the links Mittermeier had built. In 1990 Meirelles Filho obtained another grant from the Macarthur Foundation, obviously mediated by Mittermeier.[8] This money was spent in restructuring SOS, to organise its office and to start its projects at the Rainforest. Throughout the 1990s, the MacArthur Foundation was the main sponsor for SOS Rainforest:

> *(...) it was a support with a very important amount of money, more or less $700 thousands, $800 thousands for (...) three years. So this really helped a lot (...) the growth of SOS at that time. And after that we always had a very close relationship with the SOS, which came to be much more formalised ...*
>
> (Russell Mittermeier, interview, 25 February 2005)

The local-global alliance thus helped to stabilise this Brazilian organisation, while many similar groups just disappeared, as FBCN did.

Brazilian activists benefited from the link with foreign foundations, but they had to make changes to achieve the new requirements. Local programmes had to be adjusted to fit the agendas of the global environmental organisations. For instance, the activists who were until that point more concerned with urban areas began to redirect their efforts toward forest areas since the grants were available for this:

> *There were the resources coming from the United States (...) from the WWF (...). There was much of it, but (...) it had to be used to research the environmental questions in the Vale do Ribeira, this kind of thing.*
>
> (Mário Mantovani interview, 26 July 2001)

Fábio Feldmann chose to shift his focus from cities to the rainforest precisely when WWF and CI provided resources to projects in that area, trading his fight against air pollution in the industrial district of Cubatão for the protection of the whole rainforest.

The global-local link also meant that Brazilian activists had to walk towards the conservationism meaning, which was dominant among the funding organisations. For instance, Fabio Feldmann's speeches, which had socio-environmental

8 'We asked for a US$400,000 investment and the MacArthur Foundation gave it.' (Rodrigo de Lara Mesquita interview, 20 December 2004).

connotations in the beginning (see Alonso *et al.* 2005), assumed from the mid-1980s onward a newly conservationist tone, which would fit better the CI and the other international organisations' discourse.

SOS had at that point established its own relationship with the WWF, even though Mittermeier was no longer there. As one of its main leaders in Brazil in the 1990s pointed out, because of its financial position, WWF became a channel for Brazilian activists to get global funds. In the long run, however, Brazilian activists even grew dependent on the WWF:

> *The WWF created an image of itself as a donor. (…) they were thinking that we were one more source of resources, as if we were the Hewlett, the Ford or the Packard [foundations].*
>
> (Garo Batmanian interview, 31 August 2004)

At some point, the global-local alliance between WWF and SOS began to weaken. From WWF's point of view, it became uninteresting to privilege just one local ally. WWF started to diversify its alliances among Brazilian activists and to prioritise its own profile. Since Brazil was chosen as the site of the UN conference on environment in 1990, WWF started a politics of brokerage, trying to assume the role of intermediary between different sets of Brazilian activists, foreign groups, institutions and resources. As a financial supporter, WWF pushed Brazilian activism towards issues of its own interest, such as wildlife, at times sidelining the priorities of local activists. Although WWF kept releasing funds to ongoing projects in the rainforest, support was also given to projects in other biomes.[9]

The WWF's new approach raised concern among Brazilian activists:

> *When the WWF-Brazil established this strategy, it started to create a problem, because (...) we have environmental goals to achieve in forestry, in water, in management, in protection; if you do not reach these goals, the project [Brazilian activists presented] could be opportune, but [the answer for grants requirement is] no.*
>
> (Garo Batmanian interview, 31 August 2004)

A more formalised relationship grew between the WWF and many local environmental organisations. Being a donor, WWF influenced the local agenda. Furthermore, WWF created a local branch, the WWF-Brazil, in 1996, centralising the management of financial resources and projects and incorporating some local activists (like Eduardo Martins from FBCN, and Garo Batmanian, then working at the World Bank). WWF entered Brazil as a supporter, but changed into an actor – and a competitor.

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9 For instance, since 1990, WWF gave technical and financial support to the Amazonic Victory Foundation, which holds the biggest Brazilian park in Amazon. It also supported projects towards the sustainable development in the area, such as the Imazon (Institut of Amazonic Man and Environment), created in 1998, for forest stewardship in Amazon area. WWF still gave the main resources to the building of the 'Sanctuaries of Wildlife' for protection of the natural environment in private areas around national parks.

For SOS activists, the new WWF approach forced a redefinition of their own strategy:

> *(...) it dried out, I would say, one source of resources (...). (...) this transition was very tough because at that time there was not to much money around, and people started to complain about WWF not giving money anymore (...).*
>
> (Garo Batmanian interview, 31 August 2004)

SOS lost WWF resources, but maintained support from Conservation International. Since Mittemeier remained inside both SOS and CI, he continues until now to make this alliance work. He also consolidated the link, signing the 'Alliance for Rainforest Conservation' in 1998. In the subsequent years, this meant 'the implementation of one action plan for conservation of the biome, based on a common strategy' (SOS Rainforest Activities Report, 2005: 44). Mittermeier defined the global-local relationship as well–balanced:

> *(...) it is a really mutual partnership; we can learn as much from the SOS and the techniques they have used successfully here in Brazil as they can learn from us.*
>
> (Russell Mittermeier, interview, 25 February 2005)

The relationship, however, was not entirely an equal exchange. Rather, the global-local link was increasingly one-way: SOS assimilated CI resources and emulated its patterns of activism.

This relationship between foreign and Brazilian actors that Mittermeier mediated gave origin to one type of hybrid activism in which global and local spheres, meanings and actors are overlapping all the time. Nevertheless, there is a trajectory in this hybridism. Foreign actors initiated the contact, largely defined the agenda and provided the resources. In this sense, this path is global-local. However, this should not suggest that local activists are passive instruments or victims; they took the strategic decisions to emulate the global agenda and its meanings to be able to push the grants in directions that would favour their projects and beliefs. Nonetheless, they were not strong enough to build an original agenda. They emulated to survive.

2.2 The local-global path: the ISA case

Beto Ricardo, the nickname of Carlos Alberto Ricardo, son of a Gessy-Lever´s white collar worker, is member of a generation of Brazilian social scientists that had no doubts about their political commitment. Actually, most of the young people who studied social sciences in the early 1970s were looking for weapons to change, if not the world, at least the country, which was living under a dictatorship. In his undergraduate years at the University of São Paulo, Ricardo travelled around Latin America seeking elements for 'a diagnosis of local realities that would result in actions supporting concrete social claims: any kind of popular, participative and claim-making mobilisation or organisation was worthwhile' (Carlos Alberto Ricardo interview, January 2002).

His career in social mobilisation grew side by side with his interest in explaining social realities. Ricardo began a masters degree programme in anthropology at USP – which he never concluded – and later obtained a position at a new university, the University of Campinas. In 1974, however, the activist overcame the professor. Along with other professors and students, Ricardo founded the Ecumenical Centre of Documentation and Information (CEDI), and soon after received his first grant for indigenous studies.

CEDI was one of many social organisations that urban middle-class activists created during the crisis of the military regime. Like these other organisations, CEDI worked closely with and benefited from the protection of the Catholic Church. This link was not just instrumental; Ricardo himself defined CEDI's founders as 'a group of friends-Christians-activists.'

Thanks to this inspiration, CEDI, linked to an international Christian network, opened up opportunities for funding. For example, the Brazilian Indigenous People's Programme, which he created in 1978 in the Rio Negro region of the Amazon, benefited from the patronage of the Brot für die Welt, a German network of evangelic churches, of Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and, mainly and durably, of the Netherlands-based Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation (ICCO). CEDI activity consisted in 'working in this intersecting space between the ecclesiastical and the social movements' (Carlos Alberto Ricardo interview, January 2002), which were comprised primarily of indigenous peasants.

Travelling the country, Ricardo began to use his knowledge in anthropology to improve grassroots activism. He engaged in events and campaigns against the military regime as well as against multilateral agencies such as the IMF and World Bank. Yet he always maintained his roots in Rio Negro. In the following years, he specialised in projects concerning the production and dissemination of information about indigenous people, always closely working with the Catholic Church. Until that point, his organisation rarely dealt with environmental concerns:

> *(...) CEDI was one typical social organisation; they had nothing in environmental issues. They were working with the indigenous movement, the labour movement, the unions and the rural workers. They were entirely focused on social issues.*
>
> (João Paulo Capobianco interview, 21 March 2005)

In 1981, he joined a transnational campaign against the World Bank, which had released funds to the Polonoroeste Programme, a developmental project for the Amazon. The campaign was led by a network of global environmental organisations: the Environmental Defence Fund, the National Wildlife Federation, Greenpeace, WWF, Friends of the Earth, International Survival and Cultural Survival. Ricardo worked as a broker between global organisations and traditional communities living in Rondônia, primarily indigenous groups and rubber-tappers. This work laid the foundation for an entirely new meaning: 'Peoples of the Forest.' This overlapping of meanings – the forest and the social groups living in it – framed the campaign in a way that facilitated the alliance between Ricardo, grassroots groups mainly concerned with preserving lifestyle, and the global conservationist groups interested in preserving the Amazon's natural resources.

In 1986, when democratic institutions were reinstated in Brazil, Ricardo entered the national network 'Indigenous People in the Constituency,' a movement to include indigenous rights in the new Constitution. In 1989, this movement led to the emergence of another organisation concerned with indigenous rights, the Centre of Native Rights (NDI), which assumed the mission of lobbying Brasília. The NDI brought lawyers to work together with the CEDI's original staff of anthropologists, and created another strategy of mobilisation: the use of the courts for the defence of indigenous causes.

In 1989, in two campaigns in the Amazon, one against the building of a dam on the Xingu River in an indigenous area in Pará, and another in favour of Amazon preservation, the Peoples of the Forest Alliance, Ricardo used the frame 'Peoples of the Forest' to present indigenous and rubber worker claims as part of the environmental agenda. In fact, the expression first appeared in the mid-1980s and was disseminated by Ricardo and others during constitutional debates. The expression itself encapsulated the strategy. The occupation of huge forest areas by indigenous groups would be politically untenable in the long run unless the social demands of the communities dovetailed with the conservation agenda:

> *(…) we made a political bet: one strategic vision of linking the indigenous movements to the environmental issue, knowing that the indigenous weren't environmentalists since birth (...). We would have to persuade them to gather their agenda with society's aspiration [for environmental protection] into one strategy, and the socio-environmentalism fit perfectly.*
>
> (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008)

This shift in the framing of his agenda pushed Ricardo closer towards the environmental groups engaged in the defence of the Amazon and made CEDI part of the Amazon Working Group, the GTA, a network of organisations concerned with the area.

The timing was not entirely fortuitous. With the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development being hosted in Brazil in 1992, many global groups were seeking local partners, the international press was growing interested in the trade-offs between environmental conservation and development in Brazil, and financing for environmental projects was growing fast. Brazilian activists recognised that this new opportunity structure could favour them. Precisely in 1992, Ricardo received his first international accolade, when he was awarded with the Goldman Prize for the environment for his work on behalf of indigenous people in the Rio Negro region.

Ricardo used his prestige to 'environmentalise' his activism and to play a prominent role in Rio-92. As Tilly *et al.* (2001) argued, during the process of mobilisation, political identities are 'detached,' in the sense that actors may select and give prominence to some of their characteristics, the ones that best suit the context. Ricardo did just that, stressing the environmental dimension of his activism, which until then had been primarily concerned with the welfare of local communities. This made an alliance possible. Afraid of being overcome by international organisations such as Greenpeace that were interested in the Amazon, Ricardo proposed to João Paulo Capobianco, one of his former

students, that they form a union of Brazilian social and environmental organisations in order to have a stronger position at Rio-92.[10] In a meeting with Capobianco and Feldman, they reached a pivotal conclusion, as Capobianco recounts:

> *We are suckers in this story. We are not leading anything. We do not have a strong position in Brazil that give us control in this process. Let's organise.*
>
> (João Paulo Capobianco interview, 21 March 2005)

Together they created the Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and the Development, which immediately attracted 40 other organisations and that was very much important during Rio-92.

Ricardo's leadership was reinforced during this process, as well as his relationship with Capobianco, who was frustrated with the way SOS was dealing with global organisations. Capobianco experienced the SOS global-local connection as a form of submission:

> *I went to a meeting at Vancouver. I went to the meeting and it was cool, but I felt a little bad. I felt, if you know what I mean, like this: 'Oh, here is the Brazil. We must have someone from Brazil because the Summit [The Rio-92] will be there.' But, in fact, I did not say anything; there was no place on the agenda for me. Everything had been agreed beforehand (…) and I was called almost to legitimise (...). And I felt very uncomfortable (...).*
>
> (João Paulo Capobianco interview, 21 March 2005)

This dissatisfaction with the lack of accountability at global environmental organisations pushed Capobianco to join the local-global strategy Ricardo had started.

In 1994, Ricardo (bringing with him most of the members of CEDI and NDI) and Capobianco joined forces to give birth to a new organisation: the Socio-environmental Institute (ISA). ISA organised three offices, one in São Paulo, another in Brasilia for lobbying and a third one in São Miguel da Cachoeira in the Amazon, where ISA kept running the former CEDI projects. ISA formation was the turning point of the local-global strategy, when the agenda on indigenous and traditional communities assumed a genuinely environmental veneer, which allowed it to tap multiple donors.

In the case of SOS, global activists and resources met the local activists' agenda. This emulation process follows a global-local path. With ISA, the process was distinct. Local activists adapted their agenda in order to be more attractive to potential global donors and institutions, without the intermediation of global civil society organisations.

Beto Ricardo was the key activist in the process of framing the local agenda in terms that facilitated its global acceptance. He successfully added indigenous and traditional groups into the national and global environmental agenda:

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10 'At that time I looked for Capobianco. I found him and he was unhappy inside SOS, he was thinking that the SOS model had ended up in an impasse' (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008).

> *The creation of ISA had to do with the integration of the environmental dimension with CEDI's former concerns, but I think we imagined departing from a more organic concept in which the environmental question would not just be seen as one dimension but as the dimension. The very word 'socio-environmental' in ISA's name was not even used in Brazil at that time. Today it is everywhere.*
>
> (Carlos Alberto Ricardo, interview, January 2002)

This 'socioenvironmental' approach succeeded, disseminating the Peoples of the Forest frame at a global scale.

Precisely because he was dedicated to the grassroots activism with local communities – even living among them in the Rio Negro neighbourhood – Ricardo did not transform into a globetrotter. The global links were largely established by another activist, Márcio Santilli, who joined Ricardo at NDI and later founded ISA with him.

With a background in philosophy, Santilli was in the formal political arena before he joined Ricardo in NDI. He was federal lawmaker during the Constituency and later came to be the president of Funai, the federal agency concerned with the protection of indigenous rights. After becoming an NDI member in 1989, Santilli kept one eye on domestic politics and the other on the international sphere. As Executive Secretary, he kept the same pace, being responsible for hunting new global funds as well as for the maintenance of the grants CEDI already had, for instance, the ICCO´s grant for the Xikrin, Cateté and Bacajá indigenous groups in the Amazon.

During 1997 and 1998, when ISA was under construction, many activists took part in international seminars hosted in Brazil. They went to scientific workshops and engaged in virtually all meetings concerned with the Amazon, even organising their events on the topic. They also looked for partners from across Latin America, for instance, taking part in regional seminars on indigenous people.

What ISA activists did the best, however, was proselytise their organisation, presenting it for potential donors at global gatherings. In this search for global visibility, André Villas Boas, an indigenist who worked in Funai and came to ISA from NDI, went to the Amazon Coalition (The Coalition for Amazonian Peoples and Their Environment)[11] meetings in Washington in 1996 and 1997. In 2000, he forged the link between ISA and the Rainforest Foundation Norway (RFN), the Ford Foundation, the Danish and the British Embassies. In 2003, he obtained resources from the United States Agency for International Development (US AID). Another ISA activist, Nilto Tatto, procured contacts with the Italian Foreign Ministry (ISA Annual Activities Report 2000, 2003). Capobianco took part in the Board/RFI (Forest Research Institute) in Oslo. From these various sources, huge amounts of money flowed in.

11 In 1999 this was converted into a fully international representative organisation, called the Amazon Alliance.

In systematic fashion, Márcio Santilli made these global links work. In 1997, he had five meetings with World Bank representatives: the first one to deliver a document in the defence of an indigenous territory in Roraima, the other four to discuss the second phase of the Pilot Programme to Conserve the Brazilian Rainforest and for the creation of the Demonstrative Projects/Amazon (PD/A). In 1997, he accompanied ICCO representatives and British authorities in visit to São Gabriel da Cachoeira, the region ISA was most keen to protect. Santilli conceded an interview to the BBC to publicise ISA's activities and discussed the monitoring and conservation of indigenous areas with Brussels government. He finished the year participating in the Conservation and Development Forum that the Ford Foundation organised in Istanbul. In the following year, Santilli took part in five other meetings with World Bank representatives to discuss the 'ecological corridors,' and asked to authorities from the Netherlands to continue supporting the ongoing activities in the Rio Negro region.

During the following years, activities like those became routine. This strategy acquired ISA resources from many external sources. In 1996, foreign funding composed 75 per cent of the organisation's budget. Between 2000 and 2006, 58 per cent of ISA annual resources came from private donors, such as ICCO and DOEN, the Macarthur and Gordon Betty Moore Foundations; 16 per cent of the resources obtained in the same period came from multilateral institutions, such as the European Commission, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), USAID/IPAM – Amazon Institute of Environmental Studies, Institute for International Cooperation (IIZ). Foreign governments such as the Embassy of Denmark and the Embassy of Netherlands also helped. And even while maintaining independence from transnational civil society organisations, ISA also obtained a fair amount of resources from them as well. From 2001, ISA received 40 per cent of its donations from this kind of alliance, mainly from ICCO, NCA, RFN, WWF, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Catholic Agency for Overseas Development Rainforest Foundation USA (CAFOD RFUS) and Oxfam America.[12]

The pattern of global supporting continues to this day. According to Enrique Svirsky (interview, April 2006), as recently as 2006, ISA was receiving support from more than 35 international institutions to maintain a monthly budget of approximately 1 million reais. This budget is comparable to that of the larger global environmental organisations such as Greenpeace.

ISA succeeded in establishing a local-global link that worked, in the sense of channelling global resources to its local choices. This was made possible thanks to the reframing of its original claims. The indigenous cause gained a broader definition, which brought together the indigenous lifestyle and the natural resources in the area in a unique definition: 'the People of the Forest'. This frame gave the opportunity to approach diverse international sources of resources, instead of being dependent on just one global civil society organisation – as SOS was. When Beto Ricardo visited the Rio Negro region for the first time, he probably did not suspect he was starting a local-global path of activism.

12 All this data was produced using information available at the ISA annual activity report from 2000 to 2006.

3 Politics of intermediation

Part of the literature on supranational activism, especially that dealing with Global Civil studies, stresses the virtue of global-local links: their horizontal nature, the lack of power asymmetries, which would be typical just of market and political institutions. This optimistic view of global civil society, however, is more normative than empirical. In examining a concrete case, as is done here, the accountability of civil society actors is not so clear.

The cases I presented point out asymmetries between local and global civil society in a fundamental issue: the financial resources that support the activism. Global actors are usually the donors, which gives them direct influence over agenda setting. The relationship, though, is not merely a vertical hierarchy in which one pole is subordinated and the other one is dominant; the global actors do not simply enforce their agenda on the local ones.

In fact, local activists also have resources that they can mobilise in their relation to global actors. They have privileged access and close connections to local communities living in the areas targeted by environmental activism. Furthermore, they form part of elite national networks and have the power to collaborate with either economic or political elites, even maintaining connections within the nation-state. Contrary to the usual statement of Civil Society theories, the cases show that activists are not working in a field apart from the state and market. Local activists answer the challenge of globalisation by forming alliances in both fields.

Although the two cases presented, SOS and ISA, cannot be seen as pure types, they do illustrate how activists simultaneously deal with global, state and market allies. These cases make it clear that there is more than one path in the global-local politics of intermediation. On one hand, it is necessary to consider that civil society actors can choose between the state and the market as a main ally. On the other hand, they can develop two styles of approaching global partners, which can be described using the two mechanisms of inequality-building distinguished by Tilly (2005: 156, 84): one is emulation, when actors just import models from abroad, and the other is adaptation, which happens when actors reinvent existing models or create new ones.

3.1 The emulation mechanism

In the global-local connection, SOS activists found models of activism, including styles of organising, publicising, fund-raising, meanings and strategies for action. They decided to emulate this repertoire, already tried and tested by global organisations, in order to shape their own activism.

In its beginning, SOS assumed Greenpeace's strategy of aggressive proselytism, advertising in the mass media to lure big donors as well as small individual contributors. This was only possible, however, because most SOS affiliates were connected to big firms and the press. This was the case with Rodrigo Lara Mesquita, whose family owns one of the country's biggest media conglomerates:

the Estado Group, which controls a radio station (Eldorado), one of the most respected Brazilian newspapers (*O Estado de São Paulo*), several smaller newspapers and a news Website. Himself a journalist, Mesquita was born in 1954, and after attending some classes on 'eco-development' at the École des Hautes Études, he began to write articles on the destruction of the Rainforest, where his father kept a summer house, for his family's newspapers:

> *And my engagement [in the environmental activism] happened when the occupation [of the Rainforest] started to expand in an absolutely irrational way (...).*
>
> (Rodrigo de Lara Mesquita interview, 20 December 2004)

Mesquita's access to the media facilitated the spread of the SOS campaigns. SOS activists also received assistance from one marketing firm, the DPZ, to create a logo (a map of Brazil showing denuded areas) a flag, a stamp, slogans and propaganda for television – the SOS symbol is a Brazil map with missing trees. Using these channels, which obviously emulate Greenpeace, SOS succeeded in multiplying its affiliates; in 1996, there were 5,120; by 2006, the number had grown to 160,000 (SOS Rainforest Annual Activities Report 2006).

Despite increasing civil society support, SOS was still dependent on the global civil society organisations for most of its funding, which came from the channels Mitteimeyer had opened. Hence, SOS also started to emulate WWF strategies, which had a successful style of organising and raising money among entrepreneurs, firms and local elites, since it opened an office in Brazil in 1996.[13]

The key person in the transposing of the WWF's model onto SOS activism was Roberto Klabin. The only child of a Lithuanian immigrant who came to be the owner of one of the biggest firms in the paper and cellulose industry, Klabin had an elite education; he learned various languages and graduated in law. At the age of 23, he inherited control of his family's factories. He joined the environmentalist movement in the late 1970s, working close to Fábio Feldmann. He brought with him the entrepreneurial style of organisation:

> *While all of them were dreamers, idealising and shaping the movement (...), I wanted everything to work. I was the guy that was always writing on a blackboard, making datasets, structuring activities, to know how many people we needed to gather and how much to spend.*
>
> (Roberto Klabin, interview, 18 January 2005)

Klabin succeeded in giving SOS the features of a firm. Until 2002, the organisation had been very informal, then, SOS hired a consultant to do an internal evaluation. Based on this and on research on SOS's image, an internal

13 WWF-Brazil came to be a big firm, with 60 employees and seven offices running 70 projects. With such structure, WWF made alliances with local and national governments for technical cooperation in programmes like that in 2002 with the Amazon Programme of Protected Areas (ARPA). However, this programme, as others, was also supported by grants coming from multi-lateral institutions, the Global Environmental Fund (GEF) and World Bank, and from the market.

restructuring started, dividing the labour, reshaping functions and contracting full-time officials. This process was a turning point. SOS came to be similar to WWF, with a firm style – bureaucratised, with a formal internal organisation and a professional fund-raising strategy.

Being an entrepreneur himself, Klabin easily found a way to attract the support of private firms. In 1992, he launched the 'Conservationist Entrepreneur' campaign, asking for a small annual grant from each entrepreneur.[14] Big firms in the food business immediately signed up: Kibon, American Express, Pão de Açúcar and Anakol. Just in the first two years, more than 50 firms contributed, including many banks, food and paper companies, airlines and even civil construction, steel and mining firms (SOS Rainforest Foundation's *Informative Bulletin* no.5, Nov/Dec/1992).

From 2004, SOS specialised in soliciting donation from big firms, almost neglecting the campaign for individual contributions, which had composed around 50 per cent of SOS resources until 2003 (SOS Rainforest Annual Activities Report 2006). In 2004, they fell to 28 per cent, while the entrepreneurs accounted for 45 per cent of the resources (SOS Rainforest Annual Activities Report 2006). Many big national firms, such as Klabin's own company and the major national supermarkets, the Pão de Açúcar group, and multinational firms also contributed. Gessy-Lever subsidised several SOS programmes and even launched a special toothpaste, proceeds from which are donated to SOS (Adauto Basílio interview, 10 December 2004). Today, Gessy-Lever remains one of the major contributors to SOS.

One of the most successful financial strategies was the launch of the SOS-Bradesco Credicard in 1993, which brought resources and almost 100,000 affiliates by 2003 (www. sosmatatlantica.org.br accessed 11 June 2009). A similar alliance was made with Editora Três, which gives part of the proceeds from magazine subscriptions to SOS. Additionally, since 2000, SOS made associations with other marketing and press firms, such as the Abril Group, which owns the country's most widely-circulated magazines, and with the Roberto Marinho Foundation, which owns the largest free-to-air television channel in Brazil.

The effect of the SOS's emulation of WWF is counterintuitive: instead of becoming a prisoner of the global models, SOS used the fund-raising style learned among national donors, building up its financial independency *vis-à-vis* global partners. Despite the fact that SOS had resources coming from abroad, nowadays most of its funds come from national firms. From 1992 to 2005, SOS had on average 3.46 large national donors and 1.96 transnational ones each year (see SOS Rainforest Bulletins, year IV to XIX, 1992 to 2007). Today, at least 33 big firms subsidise SOS projects, supplying half of its budget. This is one of the reasons SOS has stayed focused on the Rainforest while most of the global funding and global organisations turned their focus to the Amazon.

14 'To launch the campaign, the entrepreneur Roberto Klabin [...] gathered entrepreneurs at an inauguration at the [hotel] Transamérica and at a dinner at his home' (see SOS Rainforest *Informative Bulletin* from 1992 to 2006). He held many social events like this one to please businessmen and to persuade to them to offer support.

SOS also emulated global organisations in its strategies for action, specifically the WWF and CI focus on sustainable development projects. In 1998, WWF introduced in Brazil the Green Stamp (a certification that economic activities were environmentally sound), in conjunction with programmes such as the Global Alliance for Forest Conservation and Sustainable Use, which was co-signed by the World Bank. Other alliances with the market included the Forest Stewardship Council and the Ecological Tax, a subsidy created in 2005 that favours municipalities that keep indigenous and/or conservation areas.[15] SOS followed this model. In 1993, WWF itself helped SOS in the creation of the Forest Stewardship Council in which global entrepreneurs and local farmers were engaged. In the same year, SOS started its own efforts in persuading firms to support conservation projects in order to receive the 'certification of environmental responsibility' (ISO 14000/14001).

SOS follows the CI steps in the running of the Programme for Private Natural Reserves (RPPN) (www.sosmatatlantica.org.br/index.php?section=partner&action=listPartnersmanaging (accessed 1 June 2009). The RPPN is a public-private partnership in which the environmental organisations nearly replace the state in the management of conservation areas, combining funds from Brazilian entrepreneurs and foreign institutions. CI and SOS maintain a strong alliance on this, for which they received a donation from Bradesco and US$400,000 from CEPF (Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund). As Mittermeier (interview, 25 February 2005) put it: '(...) we are working together on this RPPN concept, I think that maybe this [is] the most important part of our relationship'.[16]

SOS also incorporated CI and WWF meanings in its programmes in the sense that SOS integrated the preservation of natural resources with economic activities in its most central frames: 'sustainable development' and 'environmental education.'

An example is the 'Lagamar Ecotourist Pole'. This programme aims to preserve the Rainforest by encouraging local communities and local executives in four small cities to privilege 'low-impact' economic activities. SOS has worked in the area since 1988, building coalitions with local groups and entrepreneurs around programmes including eco-tourism, cultivation of sprouts, small-scale agro-industry, oyster production and certified extraction of wood. This is the meaning of 'sustainable development'. With such deep ties to entrepreneurs, SOS is sensitive to the need to keep businesses working.

In conjunction, SOS runs a centre for 'environmental education,' the focus of which is to disseminate techniques of natural resource management and of gaining certification for extracting forest products. SOS activists work as teachers, informing local workers about the ecological practices they should keep, and the ones they should abandon:

15 *In this case,* SOS collaborates with Conservation International, TNC-Brazil, WWF-Brazil and other Brazilian environmental organisations.

16 The same kind of coalition can be seen in the Murici Pact, an agreement among eight Brazilian environmental organisations, formed in 2004, that put SOS Mata Atlântica together with the BirdLife/SAVE Brazil, Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy and WWF-Brazil.

> Our concern is more educational than technical (...) one catalyst of the socioenvironmental conscientisation process.
>
> (*Clodoaldo Gazzetta*, www.sosmatatlantica.org.br)

The idea of 'conscientisation' posits that there is a vertical slice between SOS and local groups. In its local programmes, SOS intermediates between local communities and global actors as a translator, framing the activities of local communities in a way that make them more suitable for funding by entrepreneurs and global agencies. In another way, SOS promotes local activities that fit the global financial agenda. By doing this, SOS obtained support and resources from global organisations and institutions such as WWF, The Nature Conservancy, Conservation International, the Canadian Embassy and the MacArthur Foundation – a mutually beneficial arrangement:

> *I think it really worked for us and it is a model of how to work in partnership, [one] big NGO from one country connected and worked very close to an international NGO, both keeping also their independency (…).*
>
> (Russell Mittermeier, interview, 25 February 2005)

None of the SOS programmes rely on a direct relationship between donors and local groups. From its intermediation, as mediator and translator, SOS gains its importance. Its global connections make SOS a pathway for local communities to reach the global arena,[17] though primarily to tap into global interest themes and financial support, and not as new actors. Seen from another direction, being a representative of local programmes and grievances is also vital for SOS to keep its own global connection among partners and donors.

The case of SOS shows that, in spite of being originally an emulator of its global allies, local actors are also able to adapt, producing not a boomerang, but a ricochet effect; the meanings and practices defined by global actors are redefined and sent back. For instance, SOS first emulated sustainable development models, but now exports its own experiences, as in the case of the environmental education project 'My World', which is now disseminated across the world by Conservation International.

Actually, SOS has to balance like an acrobat. SOS is part of a global community by virtue of its style of organisation, strategies of action and fund-raising, proselytism and meaning and frame production. However, SOS is also part of a local public sphere in the sense it is engaged with local actors and local problems. With its feet in the local and its head in the global, SOS is an example of hybrid activism.

3.2 The adaptation mechanism: ISA case

ISA's politics of intermediation illustrate a path to globalisation that differs

17 The 'Condé Nast Traveller' prize for best eco-tourist destination in the world that the Lagamar region won in 1999 certainly would not have been achieved without the SOS actions in the area.

fundamentally from the one SOS followed. Whereas SOS's approach can be described as local actors seeking to localise in Brazil, relying on alliances with local elites and global environmental organisations, ISA's journey goes in another direction, from local to global, allied with the national state and global donors.

Instead of emulating global models, ISA's work is rooted in a national tradition of activism. From the Brazilian middle-class intellectual and social movements of the 1970s, Beto Ricardo brought two features to bear on environmental activism: a style of organising and a strategy for action.

The style of organising resembles the counterculture from which it came. There is an emphasis on sociability among the activists and even the incentive to endogamy. ISA is organised into teams that work under the guidance of coordinators rather than managers or leaders. The language, dress and manner of relating inside the organisation are all marked by informality. Yet strong and exclusive commitment to the organisation is expected of its staff. In contrast with SOS, the culture of the private firm is eschewed. Individuals style themselves as something like ethnographers, with long-term experiences within local communities.

ISA gathers its staff mainly from the social sciences. ISA's founding staff was comprised of 12 social scientists (ten of them anthropologists like Beto Ricardo), four geographers, four lawyers, three biologists, three engineers, two managers and one journalist. Of these 28, 13 hold a masters degree and most of them have studied or lived abroad. This is, for instance, the case of Neide Esterci. She holds a masters degree in anthropology from the University Federal of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), a PhD in political science from the University of São Paulo and post-doctoral studies at the University of London and at École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales. Currently ISA's president, she continues to teach at the UFRJ. Most of ISA´s activists have, like Esterci, a background in anthropology and expertise in Amazon's biodiversity and populations. A technical background is a precondition for being accepted at ISA.[18]

As such, ISA members are activist-experts, which makes the organisation highly professionalised:

> *ISA is a big organisation in the Brazilian landscape. It has 150 people working there. It has six regional offices; it has professional people; it has equipment.*
>
> (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008)

Not entrepreneurial like SOS activists but scientific, ISA staff work in patterns similar to an academic research centre, with projects and reports that are specialised by areas of research/action and of communication.

With so many anthropologists, ISA developed a system of producing and disseminating information about indigenous and traditional groups living in the

18 '(...) to be at ISA it is necessary to have the profile to fit the activity, a relevant background. (...). ISA sends its functionaries to courses as much as possible, trying to build their capacity in the areas they work' (Enrique Svirshy, interview, April 2006).

Amazon using ethnographic case studies, datasets, maps and photos.[19] In this endeavour, part of the activists remains rooted in Manaus, São Gabriel da Cachoeira and Canarana, cities close to indigenous groups in the Amazon. Hence, in its organising style, ISA is in a way emulating some global environmental organisations that utilise scientific knowledge. However, seen from a different perspective, ISA used this scientific style to develop its own local roots.

The grassroots insertion and expertise were both factors that press on ISA to make alliances with the federal government rather than with market actors. This has to do with changes in the federal government itself. In the 1990s, the Brazilian state started to downsize its functions and agencies, shifting from a developmental to a neoliberal paradigm. Though the environmental bureaucracy had grown during the 1990s, most of the new agencies were primarily tasked with planning and coordination, hiring civil society organisations to execute part of its former activities, such as the management of environmental areas.

Given its capacity to produce knowledge and its close connections with grassroots communities in Amazon, ISA was the Brazilian environmental organisation most capable of delivering the technical knowledge required for governmental projects in the Amazon. This pushed ISA to work in alliance with the federal government. ISA is the leading producer of 'socioenvironmental' maps, pointing out the indigenous groups' location and the areas feasible for sustainable use in the Amazon. ISA had received resources from an array of federal agencies to develop reports on Amazonian plants, indigenous communities, ethno-politics, the risk of HIV/AIDS among indigenous groups as well as on the diagnosis of environmental problems.[20] The best example, however, is the contract ISA signed for the demarcation of 11 million hectares for the Caiapós indigenous group in 1997 and 1998, in the area of the Black River because the state agencies were unable to do the job:

> *(…) ISA ended up by taking on this activity, which is typically a government function (...). Hence, in fact, there are moments ISA did work in close relation with the state (...).*
>
> (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008)

Around 20 per cent of the ISA budget comes from governmental sources. Furthermore, when Marina Silva, a People of the Forest leader became the Minister of Environment in 2003, some ISA members came to be part of the federal government. ISA lobbied for Marina's appointment,[21] and Capobianco was

19 Some ISA activists also specialised in the interpretation of the legislation concerning the Amazon as well as to lobbying to influence law production.

20 Grants for this came from the national organisations, such as the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Education and from the autarchies concerned with indigenous and traditional communities matters, CNPq, Funbio; Funai; Fundo Nacional do Meio Ambiente; Incra, state governments and secretaries. See ISA Report Activities from 1997 on.

21 'When president Lula was elected we immediately began a movement to call president Lula's attention to Marina Silva´s potential (...).'. (João Paulo Capobianco, interview, 21 March 2005). 'Of course, it is totally related to us the fact that Marina became the Minister, we desired that, we worked for that (...).'(Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008).

named her Secretary of Biodiversity and Forests [22] and, later in 2007 the Executive Secretary of the ministry. From such a lofty position, Capobianco was able to include other ISA members in the formulation of environmental policies and brought ISA ideas and projects to the ministry.[23]

Hence, ISA is very much a national-local organisation, working with grassroots communities and federal state. However, ISA is also a global organisation. Since its birth, ISA had global connections, mainly concerned with the financial support of its ongoing projects. These global resources came from three different sources.

First, ISA was the heir of CEDI's international connections with institutions committed to the protection of human and indigenous rights:

> *(…) the CEDI had connections with churches and it had connections with researchers (…), when we created ISA (...) we would like to keep the 1970s and 1980s years' supporters (...).*
>
> (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008)

In fact, ISA maintained the support of global Christian organisations such as Novib, as well as secular ones like the Ford Foundation.[24] Second, ISA's alliances with the state provided an opportunity to consolidate new relationships with global actors. At the time Capobianco was in the Brazilian government, ISA had representatives – mainly Santilli – in the most important global forums in the environmental and indigenous issues, such as the permanent sessions of the UN and OAS global link. ISA could, in this way, work as a broker between local and global arenas and actors concerning biodiversity in the Amazon, for instance in the case of the Biodiversity Programme in Indigenous Areas, which was formed in 2003 in collaboration between the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and the Ministry of Environment and Indigenous National Foundation (Funai). The same occurred in the case of the Caiapós Reserve; an alliance with the state was also a way to get access to global grants.[25] Hence, the state worked for ISA activists as a space to access global spheres.

Third, in order to benefit from global funds, ISA adapted its projects and discourse:

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22 Capobianco felt himself more representative of the Brazilian environment activists than SOS activists, since, he argues, '(…) SOS was the Atlantic Rainforest and ISA was the Brazil – with a strong presence in the Amazon' (João Paulo Capobianco, interview, 21 March 2005).

23 For instance, in 2003, ISA produced a document on deforestation in Amazonia, which was integrally incorporated by the Ministry.

24 In 2006 and 2007, for instance, ISA got grants from Blue Moon Foundation; CAFOD; the DOEN foundation; the FORD foundation; Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation; H3000; the ICCO;Packard Foundation; and Terre dês Hommes (ISA Financial Reports, 2006 and 2007).

25 '(...) the Brazilian government had that endowment, (...), supported by the German government, an internationalised money (...). So it had to re-export this resource for the UNDP in order to hide ISA (...)' (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008).

> *There is a globalisation of calls (...), a globalised market of projects (…). Right now, ISA sent a huge project (...) [in response to a global call].*
>
> (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008)
>
> *ISA even created 'The Institutional Development Section,' responsible for looking at calls for proposals (...).*
>
> (Enrique Svirsky interview, April 2006)

Indeed, ISA even designs projects to fit donor requirements. As a result of these approaches of global opportunities and allies, today, about 80 per cent of ISA's funding comes from international sources, though it relies on more than 80 donors to fund more than 100 projects, according to Beto Ricardo (interview, 22 July 2008). The side effect has been dependence on the policies of global agencies.

Since ISA has been so successful in getting resources from the state and global sources, it came to be – in contrast to the SOS – unreceptive to the contributions of private firms. When it does accept money from private sources, however, most of the time the first step is made by the company:[26]

> *(…) the Brazilian firms are the smallest supporter of our work. We know the private sector does not care about supporting socio-environmental causes (...).*
>
> (Enrique Svirsky, interview, April 2006)

Unlike SOS, ISA's global links are never directly to global civil society organisations like WWF and CI. Generally, ISA works in parallel with the global environmental organisations in the Amazon. Episodic collaboration occurs around general themes like deforestation, climate change and natural conservation.[27] However, cooperation is difficult to maintain. The only enduring partner in this field has been the Rainforest Foundation Norway because, like ISA, this organisation '(...) is a metamorphosis of Norwegian civil society movements from the 1980s. They already share with us the relation with the indigenous groups, with the Amazon (…)' (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008).

Actually, most of ISA's relationships with global environmental organisation are conflictive. Conflict around staff was the first issue to arise with Greenpeace, which pursued, in its fixation on Brazil, a strategy of recruiting activists in non-environmental social movements.[28] With the WWF, the conflict was around the control of activism in the Amazon. In the 1990s, WWF started to work in the Black River region, in direct competition with ISA, which did not welcome the newcomers:

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26 As the case of the multinational Grendene, that gave support for the ISA programmes Y Ikatu Xingu, and commercialised shoes inspired by indigenous motifs and disseminated by the global top model Gisele Bundchen (http://ri.grendene.com.br/port/apresentacoes/03.asp accessed 11 June 2009).

27 'We participate in a coalition around the deforestation pact (...) ISA is a kind of coordinator of this group, which involves Greenpeace, WWF, etc, (…)' (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008).

28 '(…) they [Greenpeace] took lots of folks from us, lots of researchers from us (…)' (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008).

> *I never heard about those (WWF) people (...). They are not included in our list [of partners]; their themes did not conform to our repertoire (…). [The relationship ended up in] (…) a real conflict at a seminar for strategic planning (...). This organisation [the WWF] brought a mediator that imposed (…) priorities that had no concern to the inter-culturality.*
>
> (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008)

A main issue in this conflict is around meanings: *conservationism*, represented by global organisations such as WWF, versus ISA's *socio-environmentalism*. Ricardo credits ISA with the coining of this expression, which aims to integrate the claims of indigenous and extractives based communities with environmental concerns:

> *(...) we made a political bet (…) connecting indigenous groups to environmental issues (...). We believe that there is a diverse environmental landscape in Brazil because there is a diversity of cultures (...).*
>
> (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008)

ISA's relationship with global environmental organisations had two outcomes. Looking from the global down to the local, it can be said that ISA's grassroots activism in the Amazon forced the global organisations aiming to work there to conform:

> *(...) they come with formulaic standards (...), but (...) their dogma is eroded (...); they are forced to mix with local actors, local communities; they are submitted to powerful influence through this process.*
>
> (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008)

Looking out from the local to the global, ISA was also forced to adapt to face its global competitors, mainly by assimilating topics from the global discourse such as the '[natural] resources limit', 'unsustainability of consumption patterns', 'global territorial planning' and 'climate change':

> *We bought many of those ideas, we modified them, incorporated them (...).*
>
> (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008)

ISA tried to imbue global formulas with local meanings. This is the basis for the local adaptation of global programmes and categories such as 'environmental education' and 'sustainable development.' The names are kept – since they attract the global money – but the meaning is adapted to suit ISA programmes.

ISA's 'environmental education' programme, for example is based on local traditions, connected to grassroots movements (as will be seen in next section). The 'sustainable development' programmes are similar in this regard. The Black River programme has a strong participatory component. ISA encouraged local communities to organise,[29] then helped them to produce a socio-environmental diagnosis and stimulated them to suggest economic activities that would be sustainable (see ISA Activities Report, from 1995 to 2006). Pilot projects were then organised, and local leaders trained on how to manage the next steps, including financial and administrative support. In this way, indigenous and extractive activities are adapted to fit the global agenda and its donors.

On such projects, ISA works as the broker in a coalition of local communities, governmental agencies, multilateral organisms and local and foreign NGOs, while acting as interlocutor between these focal activities, national authorities and the global grants. For instance, ISA receives resources from national governmental agencies (Ibama, Fema, Funai, Mato Grosso Government/Prodeagro/UNDP) and from global environmental organisations (Rainforest) to subside the local programme Project Xingu Frontiers.

In general terms, ISA follows a local-global path that is distinct from the one SOS followed. Instead of emulation, the main path here is adaptation.

In that sense, ISA is like the inverted image of SOS: its feet are planted in the global since its funding comes from there, but its head remains in the local:

> *ISA is verticalised. ISA has a root and an antenna.*
>
> (Beto Ricardo, interview, 22 July 2008)

Though this can be seen as an achievement, since ISA succeeded in putting local subjects into national and global budgets, this strategy also made ISA dependent on global funds. It certainly has local roots, but it is not able to survive without its global antenna. This is another way to do hybrid activism.

The two cases, SOS and ISA, highlight that there is more than one path in the connection between global and local. Whether the process is initiated locally or globally determines the pattern of this activism – as emulation or adaptation – but does not change the basic fact that there is always an intertwining of the local and the global, a hybridism.

4 Politics of knowledge

An explanation on local-global activism requires, as Leach and Scoones (2007) argued, an effective incorporation of the 'politics of knowledge' into the analysis. Studies from a constructivist perspective, such as Epstein (1996), have demonstrated that social movements have increased the use of science and other forms of knowledge as a weapon in political conflicts. The expert discourses come to be part of the definition of the problems at stake, including not just the science, but also other forms of expertise, such as codes of law and traditional knowledge. Political uses of knowledge are a constant in global environmental activism, with activists presenting environmental problems as something that 'science' has already 'demonstrated.' On the other hand, traditional communities affected by those 'environmental' problems may look at them first through the lens of their

29 In 1993, ISA activists incentivised 39 indigenous and 14 grassroots organisations to be born, and even helped to create a federation gathering them, the Foirn (Federation of Black River indigenous organisations). ISA names this mobilising process as a 'capacity building' programme: '(…) we do a local work with the communities, acting with local organisations, maroon people, indigenous, stimulating this communities' self-government according to the local claims' (Enrique Svirsky, interview, April 2006).

traditional knowledge: the knowledge produced by the experience of the problem itself.

The Brazilian environmental activists' groups described in this article assume the task of mediating conflicts between the two different systems of knowledge. SOS and ISA activists compromise between global scientific knowledge and traditional local knowledge. Both do it by attributing diverse local meanings to global frames in another manifestation of their distinct styles.

SOS emulates WWF by creating a hierarchy of knowledge: science remains the commanding knowledge system, while traditional knowledge enters as a source of local information. By adopting WWF's model of the 'rational use of nature,' the path to conservation is necessarily through technical regulation to minimise economic damage:

> (...) scientific research proves the rational use of natural products ultimately raises productivity and income at the same time that it assures the regeneration and conservation of nature.
>
> (www.wwf.org.br/natureza_brasileira/meio_ambiente_brasil/amazonia)

Natural science and economics would be the best way to achieve a compromise between economic uses and natural conservation. These meanings were transferred to Brazilian activists in two ways. Mittermeier himself worked as a channel of knowledge transfer from WWF and a small elite of Brazilian activists while building up SOS. Additionally, WWF distributed 136 scholarships to Brazilian environmentalists for Masters and PhD degrees in the Nature and Society Programme at the State University of New York until 2000 (http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACA222.pdf accessed 11 June 2009). In this way, many SOS activists incorporated the WWF's technical approach to environmental issues, emphasising solutions through new technologies.

In its 'sustainable development' projects, SOS does not expect local communities in forest areas to continue making a living based on artisan production outside the capitalist market. Thus, SOS has built relationships with groups whose lifestyle would be appropriate for developing environmentally oriented capitalist projects. These refer mainly to eco-tourism and small-scale agriculture conforming to the regulated use of natural areas. In this 'rationalisation' of the use of natural resources, local traditional knowledge can be incorporated only when it matches the scientific requirement brought by the environmental sciences. This approach enabled SOS to work with 19 municipalities in the early 1990s, producing environmental diagnosis and signing 60 partnerships with public and private entrepreneurs to regulate extraction and reforestation projects and preserve specific areas. These projects would combine the 'conservation latent in the private owner, offering them un-bureaucratised financial resources, institutional partnership and scientifically-based guidance.' (www.sosmatatlantica.org.br accessed 11 June 2009).

SOS also emulated the WWF's style of transferring scientific knowledge to local communities. This is carried out through 'environmental education' programmes [30] that operate like the Lagamar project; SOS activists deliver courses on techniques for sustainable cultivation and the 'rational use' of natural resources to teachers,

families and children. The knowledge only flows in one direction: from activists to the community. This is because, as clearly stated in the Guararu Project, local communities have to be 'conscientised' in a 'strategy of consciousness raising.' (SOS Rain Forest Activities Report 2005: 25).

ISA's politics of knowledge is supposed to work in the opposite direction. Being connected to grassroots movements, ISA departs from local knowledge and then makes it suitable to global actors. Its programmes assimilate native categories. Its 'socio-environmental maps' are a *bricolage* of high skills in computation and geographic information collected with the 'people of the forest.' This is the case with the local capacity building programme for sustainable stewardship in the Black River, in which the knowledge construction itself is politicised and seen as a way to foment local independence (ISA Activities Report 2001). The pilot-project for fish breeding and agro-forest management, also in the Black River region, aims to '(…) develop and multiply natural models, which ally traditional and technical knowledge' (ISA 2004: 22).

The combination of global categories and local knowledge also appears in activities related to 'environmental education.' The term is converted into 'indigenous' education. ISA programmes in the Black River and in Xingu regions, for instance, consist in producing books and tutorial materials in native languages, training native teachers and creating indigenous schools. The aim is to 'transmit knowledge' and to build autonomy by 'ensuring the conditions for the community to articulate and mobilise leadership around an agenda of political issues related to the administration of the park, and to take charge of the development and management of projects.' (www.socioambiental.org accessed 11 June 2009).

ISA aims to optimise traditional patterns of use of natural resources and to develop a defensive political stance on the local knowledge and local uses of biodiversity. Intellectual property such as the rights to access natural resources and patenting forms of management are central issues. Since ISA activists include lawyers, the organisation has naturally joined in debates on the legal property of natural resources, on indigenous rights and on geo-spatialisation. ISA works as a broker, combining science and local knowledge.

Although both groups of activists refer to the democratisation of knowledge and the achieving of a horizontal relationship between local and global groups, their inclusion of citizens in production and access to environmental knowledge occurs in two different ways. SOS uses a vertical politics of knowledge. It emphasises global scientific knowledge as a way of including local groups in capitalist dynamics and global politics. ISA proposes a horizontal politics of knowledge, aiming to inject local traditional knowledge into the national and global environmental debates.

The outcomes also differ. SOS's style tends to have high effectiveness and low accountability, since the activists select the abilities and knowledge of local

30 WWF-Brazil states that: 'the communities are conscientised about environmental questions and had incentives to plan their future, besides they develop specific skills for administration and sustainable management of natural resources' (www.wwf.org.br/wwf_brasil/).

groups. ISA's grassroots model tends to be more accountable, giving voice to local actors, but remains restricted to small-scale experiences – and suffers the risk of disappearing with the disengagement of ISA activists. Though ISA has a more democratic discourse, both ISA and SOS work as representatives of local groups in national politics and global spaces. In this way, both sow dependence among local groups on their skills, since activists orchestrate the politics of knowledge just as they do the politics of intermediation.

Tarrow (2005) suggests that contemporary mobilisations are 'multi-issues,' in the sense that they aggregate many diverse demands. However, Brazilian activists do no only aggregate but also reframe issues. Using broad frames, such as 'sustainable development' and 'Peoples of the Forest', Brazilian activists build 'meaning packages', an overlap of local and global meanings, which make possible the building of broad alliances with global activists and donors.

5 Hybrid activism

Based on the two cases presented, some conclusions can be drawn on the relation between local and global levels of activism.

The first and most general conclusion relates to the identity of activists. As discussed earlier, the concepts offered by the social movement literature – the 'activists without borders' described by Keck and Sikkink (1998) or Tarrow's (2005) 'rooted cosmopolitans' – do not accurately depict the cases presented here. These concepts presuppose the existence of two separate realms, two realities, to be connected, as if local and global could be geographically identified and distinct. The Brazilian cases show that local and global are intermingled, being most of the time two sides of the same coin. What makes 'local' and 'global' exist are activists' biographies. They live in both spheres, and as they move, they carry with them meanings and knowledge and forms of action and organising.

This process, however, follows two distinct trajectories. The difference is not whether the activist stresses the local or the global; it is not a question of balance. Rather, it is a question of the modality of hybridism that combines the two: global-local and local-global. Two mechanisms produce these two modalities: emulation and adaptation. The SOS case is an example of the global-local hybrid identity, built through emulation, while the ISA case shows a local-global hybrid identity, raised from adaptation. Of course, the types are not pure, but they represent two paths that hybrid activism can take.

The politics of knowledge are also manifest in two ways. In one case, the global meanings, knowledge and programmes ('sustainable development' and 'conservationism') are emulated at the local level in a top-down process that enforces agendas on local communities. In the other case, local knowledge and meanings ('people of the forest', 'socio-environmentalism') are renamed and reshaped to adapt to the global sphere, in a bottom-up process. In spite of these differences, the politics of intermediation in both cases force local communities to rely on environmental activists as their representatives in global spheres.

My cases also shed doubt on the idea that there is an affinity between the market and globalisation, as there is between the state and nationalisation. The market is usually seen as a globalising force, but in the case of SOS, the choice to engage with market actors did not lead to strengthening a global activism; quite the opposite, it strengthened the local dimensions of the group's action and financing. Conversely, ISA employed its connection with the state to reinforce its globalisation by assuring access to global grants and spaces.

Figure 5.1 summarises these conclusions.

Figure 5.1 Hybrid activism

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">GLOBAL-LOCAL PATH</th><th colspan="2">LOCAL-GLOBAL PATH</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Global Civil Society organisations (International Conservation and WWF)</td><td colspan="2">Local communities</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td><td colspan="2">ISA</td></tr>
<tr><td>Style of organisation (firm-like style)

Grants

Scientific knowledge</td><td>Spaces (negotiation forums with local elites)

Conservationist meanings (Forest) adjusted to local action: 'Atlantic Rainforest'</td><td>Style of organising (grassroots movements)

Traditional knowledge

Local meanings adjusted to global arenas: 'People of the Forest'; 'socio-environmentalism'</td><td>Spaces (global conferences and summits)

Grants</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Market (entrepreneurs / donors)</td><td colspan="2">National State (alliance for access to global conferences and grants)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">SOS Rainforest</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Local communities</td><td colspan="2">Global donors and agencies</td></tr>
</table>

These conclusions allow us to readdress the theoretical debate on the globalisation of the activism.

In relation to the Global Civil Society approach, which sees civil society organisations as deeply democratising, the evidence in this article shows that these organisations can also impose the same kind of domination they denounce states for inflicting on communities. A discourse of horizontal accountability can be combined with the vertical politics of intermediation. Furthermore, the relation between Northern and Southern civil society organisation can be hierarchical in two other ways. First, since the grants come from European and North American organisations, a patron-client relationship between Northern donors and Southern recipients can be created. Second, globalisation can reinforce an existing national hierarchy among members of civil society by creating a gap between two categories: (local) common citizens and (globalised) professional activists. The benefits of globalisation seem to remain restricted to the latter, a stratum of

high- and middle-class liberal professionals, who certainly do not represent the society as a whole. In sum, the Global Civil Society perspective does not see that hybrid activism is a double-edged sword. It can be a tool to resist asymmetries as much as a cause of them. It can create a hierarchy of citizenship, open only to educated upper-class citizens from all over the world. Globalisation and democratisation are not synonymous, even when civil society is at the helm.

The cases provide support for Tarrow's (2005) thesis that political participation on a global scale is the business of a few. Engagement primarily takes place among previously mobilised national groups rather than among individual citizens. Activists are highly educated, well-connected, well-travelled polyglots. As such, they are able to shuttle between spaces and levels of action as they exploit global opportunities such as international conferences, treaties and agreements, and gain access to the financial and cultural resources essential to transnational cooperation. Activists also build an identity as professionals of activism. In one sense, they are expert-activists, as shown in the ISA case, able to add local knowledge to global debates. As Rootes (2003) argues, in order to manage large amounts of money and complicated international cooperation contracts, activists professionalize, sometimes running their organisations like private firms, with internal hierarchies, a division of labour and a marketing strategy, as the SOS case illustrates. Hence, activists gain access to global spaces as representatives of and experts on local communities and as the implementers of local environmental programmes.

Keck and Sikkink (1998) also point out this dimension of transnational activism when they recognise that a global sphere requires language skills and global connections available to a select group of middle- or upper-class movement leaders. Despite this observation, however, Keck and Sikkink do not describe how activists' social profiles and trajectories structure their access to global spheres. Their 'boomerang hypothesis' states that activists gain access to transnational networks as an alternative strategy for influencing national politics, and yet they stress the globalisation of activism, neglecting the links those activists maintain with groups in their native countries. In contrast, I have described how rooted in the local context the global activist can be, describing how global-local links are made in concrete interactions. Activists circulate, make links and obtain resources outside their home country, precisely because – and not despite of – their place in local and national contexts.

With regards to the boomerang hypothesis, another critique can be raised from the cases presented here. The boomerang hypothesis supposes that local issues that do not find resonance with the state are carried into the global arena to get support and then brought back to pressure national governments. These cases, particularly that of ISA, show that the national state can even operate as an ally, and as a channel to promote issues at the global level. Instead of a boomerang from the local to the global and back again, we can alternatively imagine the process as a ricochet: meanings and practices coming from global actors are emulated or adapted by local actors, which send back modified meanings and practices. This continuous movement of adaptation and emulation seems to generate a hybrid activism, the characteristics of which are determined by whether the departure point of the process is local or global.

In hybrid activism, the global is not merely imposed on the local or vice-versa. Rather, the two realities mingle and are lived by activists as part of a single experience, comprised of scenes not unlike the one at JFK airport I imagined. The man waiting for his flight is not just a global activist. To keep the activism and his own career working he must return home. He can survive in both arenas because of his lived experience, his meanings and strategies are made of a mix of local and global. That is why 'hybrid activist' seems the best way to designate him.

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